

# SCENIC BIKEWAYS OF WICHITA - SEDGWICK COUNTY

Condition survey report.



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City of Wichita -Planning.

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## NTRODUCTION

- The bikeways within Wichita run along either major transportation corridors or natural corridors within the city.
- These bikepaths connect several residential and non-residential areas within the city, offering opportunities to explore Wichita.
- This report presents the existing conditions of bike paths in Wichita as of July 2002

Following are the existing bike paths along the major transportation and natural corridors within Wichita:

### **1.Arkansas river bike path:**

The scenic bike path runs along the Big Arkansas River through the heart of the city linking various residential neighborhoods along the river.

### **2.Downtown bike path:**

The bike path runs along Central street (in the downtown area) starting just east of Waco and connecting to the river bike path.

### **3.Gypsumcreek bike path:**

The bike path runs along Gypsum creek and Kansas Turnpike through several park areas and medium density residential areas .The path terminates within the residential areas at East borough.

### **4.The Canal route:**

This bike path runs beneath Interstate 135 from Mc Adams Park and terminates north of Pawnee street.

### **5. K-96 bike path:**

The bike path runs along interstate K-96 extending from north Oliver street and terminates east 127' -street.

## CRITERIA

Existing condition survey for the bike paths shall be based on the following criteria:

1. Paving conditions.
2. **Trees/existing** vegetation.
3. Lighting
4. Existing land-use **around/along** the bike path, their effects and safety issues
5. Overall ambience
6. General use

## ARKANSAS RIVER BIKEPATH:

**LOCATION:**



This bike path runs along Big Arkansas River and along an important transportation corridor -McLean boulevard.

The path extends from the Sedgwick County Zoo and Botanical gardens on the Northwest side of the city and links several residential areas along Mc Lean boulevard. This north –south path has some **interesting** parks along the corridor.



The bike path along the river and Mc Lean



The entry way to the river path

1. **Land-use:** The bike path runs along the river and a busy transportation corridor Mc Lean boulevard. The path appears to be greatly used, as it is easily accessible to the people living in the residential areas along the path and is **safe**.
2. **Paving:** The bike path is an 8' wide concrete path that runs along the river. The path has well -maintained paving conditions and has beautiful, mature riparian vegetation. Some of the trees along the path serve as a buffer between the path and McLean Boulevard.
3. **Lighting:** The path has some effective lighting and "bike path relaxation points" which offer opportunities for bikers to relax and enjoy the beautiful view shed of the river. There are some existing wetland areas along the river path.
4. **Overall ambience:** It is a pleasant biking experience offering interesting view sheds along the river and giving opportunity to get close to nature.





a) The adjacent picture shows the river flood covering the bike path along the river. Although this flooding had occurred only in a certain portion of the bike path, this makes it difficult to continue biking.



b) The bike path along the river



c) The bike path (paving) and proximity to the river



d) Resting points on the path



e) Storm water drainage issues

The above images show the character of the river bike path; the existing lighting and the paving material (concrete),

The existing condition of the bike path along Mc Lean has sound paving conditions.

Some of the important issues that need to be addressed along this path are flooding of the river. As the bike path runs very close to the river, the river overflow covers certain portion of the bike path. Most people appear to be jogging along this path.

## DOWNTOWN BIKEPATH:

Map of the Arkansas River area in Wichita, Kansas, showing the river, surrounding streets, and green spaces. The river flows from the top left towards the bottom right. Streets shown include W Franklin Ave, N Woodrow Ave, N Waco Ave, N Main St, N Broadway Ave, W Murdock Ave, N Wichita St, W Central Ave, E 3rd St N, W 2nd St N, E Douglas Ave, N McLean Blvd, N Elizabeth St, N Seneca St, and W 2nd St N. Green spaces are highlighted in green, and the river is blue.

This bike path runs through the downtown area and links to the river bikepath. The path runs along West Central (street) and continues further to link with the existing river bike path.



a) The existing bike path along Central.



b) Sycamores planted along bike path has shallow roots that damage the path



c) Some trees may be a hindrance to the bikers



d) The bike path crossing over the river



e) The existing cracks due to the root system of the trees.



f) Existing minor cracks in some areas

1. **Land use:** The bike path is located in the central business district and is surrounded by office buildings on the east and has some medium density residential areas on the west side.
2. **Paving conditions:** The pictures demonstrate the existing paving conditions of the bike path at various points and shows presence of cracks in certain areas due to varied reasons. The picture a, b and e shows the portion of the bike path through the downtown area. These cracks may have occurred due to the shallow-root system of the Sycamore trees planted along the bike path.
3. **Lighting:** The path may need lighting in certain areas on the west side. Currently, the path shows no lighting.
4. **General use:** The purpose of the path seems to serve as a connection between the downtown region and the river. The path is also used by the medium density residential areas along the path. Besides biking it is used for activities such as jogging.
5. **Observations:** Some trees along the path are low branching and may be a hindrance to the bikers while biking. (Picture c)

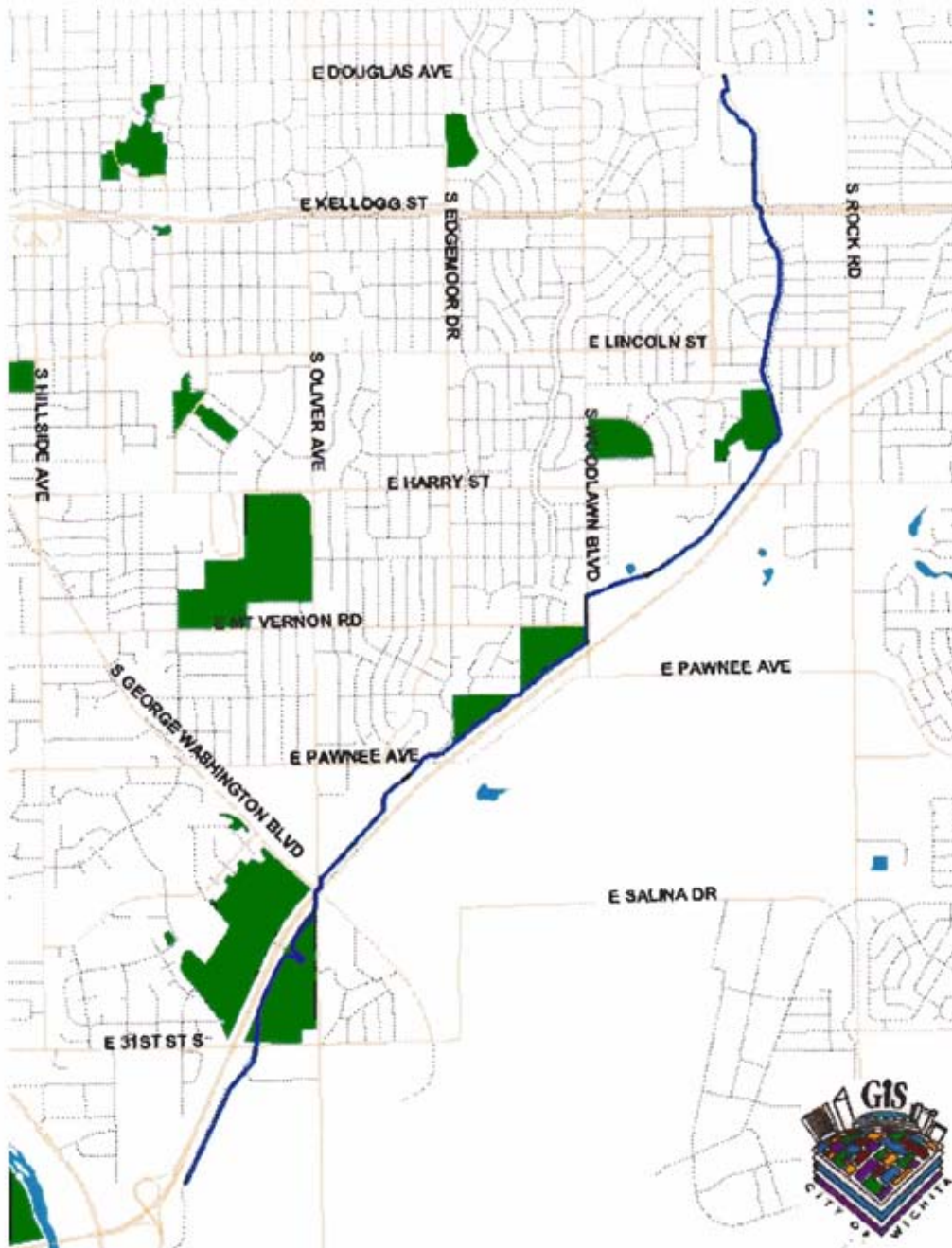
## **G**YPSUM CREEK BIKEPATH

1. **Land use:** This path runs along the turnpike through some park areas and low to medium density residential areas. The Cessna park particularly is a lively place along this bike path.
2. **Paving:** This is a concrete bike path 8-10' wide running through residential areas and parks. There are minor cracks on the south side of the bike path beyond Pawnee street (picture c). The bike path may need more maintenance on the south side compared to the north side.
3. **Lighting:** Certain areas along turnpike may require some lighting.
4. **General use:** People seem to be using this bike path for jogging and exercising purposes on the south side as well as north side of this bike path from Lincoln street to East Borough. This bike path is in a reasonably good condition.



5. **Ambience:** This bike path runs along the natural corridor Gypsum creek making it a pleasant biking experience

**LOCATION:**





a) A barricade to stop motor vehicles



b) Cessna park- a lively place along the bike path



c) Minor cracks in the path



d) Bike path through Cessna Park



e) Gypsum creek along the bike path

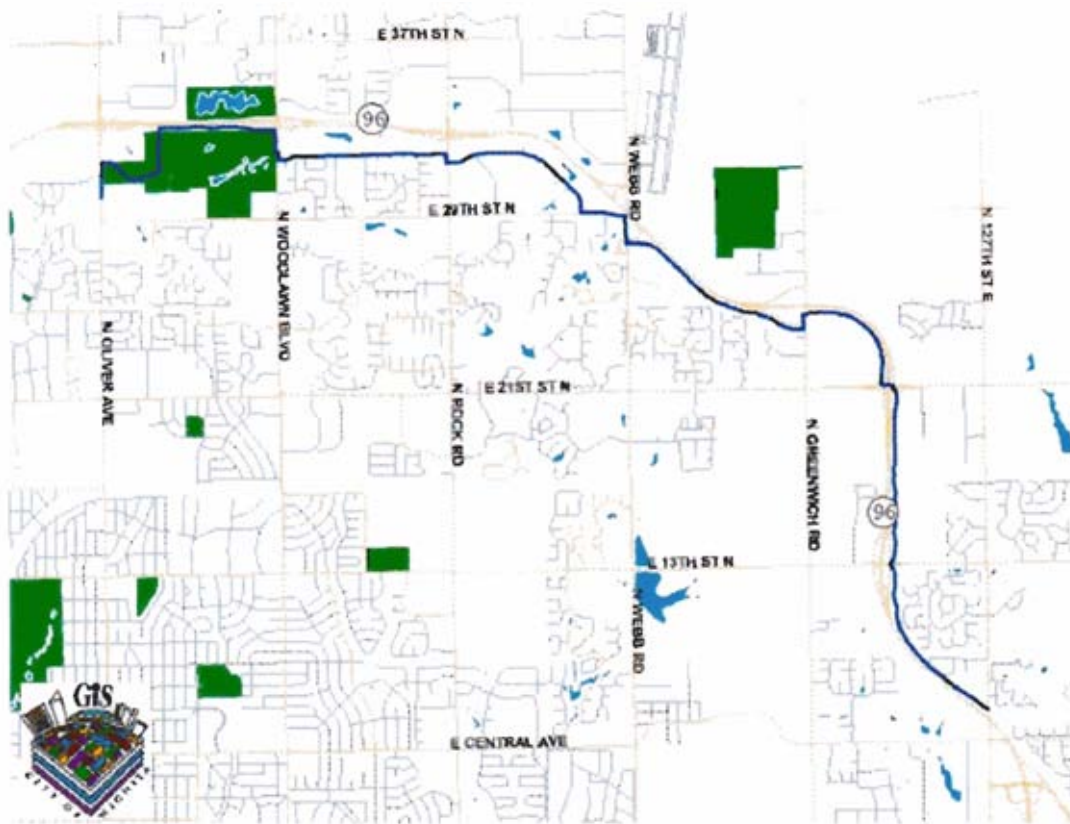


f) The bike path

Observation: This bike path has good **signages** at various points.

## K-96 BIKEPATH:

### LOCATION:



1. **Land-use:** This bike path travels through Chisholm creek park, Fantasea park some commercial and residential areas. The bike path connects some interesting residential areas on the northeast part to the city.
2. **Paving:** The bike path is a concrete path with varying widths ranging from 8'-10' This path is relatively wider in the park areas. It is in good paving condition.





a) Chisholm creek park



b) Bike path along 32<sup>nd</sup> street



c) Signages



d) Chisholm creek park

3. **Lighting:** The path may need lighting in some areas.

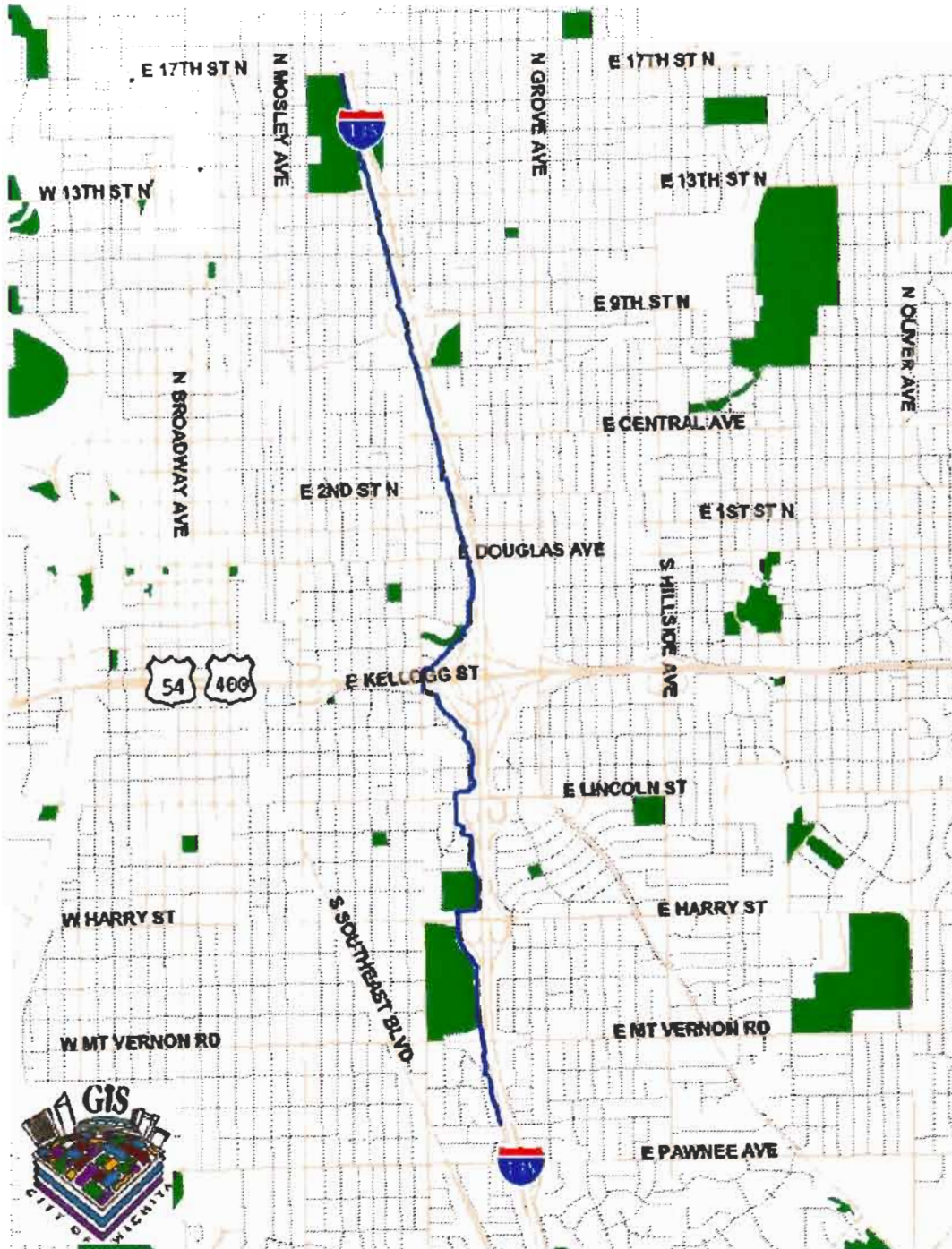
4. **Observations.** This bike path may require some trees for shade and lighting in areas particularly beyond Greenwich. This path has signages at significant points such as landmarks, intersections. More signages and lighting along this path would be desirable especially the stretch from Rock road along 32<sup>nd</sup> street to Webb road and beyond. *This path has fewer relaxation points*

5. **General use:** The path is used for a variety of activities from biking, jogging.

6. **Ambience:** The bike path runs through residential as well as busy commercial areas and may need some screening and buffering along some areas. Trees may be planted for shade in few areas along the path and have at least one relaxation point.

## CANAL ROUTE BIKEPATH:

LOCATION:





This bike path extends north–south and runs along the canal and beneath interstate-135. It connects Mac Adams park on the north side to Linwood park on the south side.

**1.Paving:** This is an asphalt bikeway 8'-10' wide. This bike path offers unique biking experience through, the midst of the city. It connects various residential, non –residential areas .It also has a pedestrian path that runs along the bike path.

This bikeway is in need of landscape and paving maintenance. The asphalt bikeway has cracks in some areas.

**2.Lighting:** Some of the light poles don't function and may need some repairs. Some poles seem to be damaged.

**3.Observations:** Most people prefer using this bikepath on the south side.

The bike path has some relaxation areas. Trash cans may be required along this path. Overgrown landscape may need pruning.



a) Bikeway relaxation point at McAdams park



b) A view from 17th looking at the bikeway



c) Signages along the bike path.



d) Trees provide shade along the bikeway



e) Overgrown landscape covers signage boards



f) Trail through Linwood Park.

**4. Safety:** Several homeless people appear to be wandering along the path. The path appears to be under-used as it is extremely lonely and feels unsafe.

Although this path has a potential to be a good path, it is in need of some repairs and demands attention, today.



g) Existing fence along some areas along the path



h) Parks along the path

#### **SOME OBSERVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL USAGE OF BIKEWAY:**

Following are some of the criteria that may contribute towards observed usage of a bike path:

1. Good paving conditions.
2. Good lighting.
3. Easy accessibility i.e. Connectivity - well connected to the existing sidewalk bikeway system
4. Good signages

5. Trash cans
6. Relaxation areas.
7. Well maintained landscape -Trees, shrubs, ground cover, creeks.
8. Safety.